

Message Text

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15

ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 EB-11 INT-08 OMB-01

TRSE-00 SCEM-02 SS-15 NSC-10 CIEP-02 PM-07 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 RSR-01 (ADP) W

----- 048699

R 250700Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3929

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0751

DEPT PLEASE PASS COMMERCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EMIN, EAID, UNDP, BY

SUBJECT: INTEREST IN BURUNDI NICKEL AND PETROLEUM POTENTIAL

REF A. BUJUMBURA 466; B. BUJUMBURA 750

1. INTEREST IN BURUNDI NICKEL DEPOSITS HAS RISEN SHARPLY
OVER LAST FEW WEEKS AND SPECULATION OVER RICH DEPOSIT HAS
NOW BEEN MADE PUBLIC BY AFP (REFTEL B).

2. SO FAR AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, AMERICAN INTERESTS
REPRESENTED HERE AT PRESENT BY ONLY ONE GROUP, A JOINT EFFORT
BY ST. JOE MINERALS CORPORATION AND INTERNATIONAL SUBSEA
(SOMETIMES KNOWN AS INTERSEAS) DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF
NEW YORK. GROUP HEADED BY JOHN TOMAS, PRESIDENT OF
INTERSEAS, WHO HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN THIS AREA FOR TWO
OR THREE YEARS AND SAID TO BE CONCESSIONAIRE FOR LAKE
KIVU MINERAL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS. GROUP IS
SEEKING EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR PETROLEUM
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IN BURUNDI AS PART OF LAKE TANGANYIKA AND RUZIZI DELTA AS

WELL AS FOR MINERALS IN NEWLY DISCOVERED AREAS IN EAST CENTRAL BURUNDI. GROUP HAS NOT FILLED EMBASSY IN ON ITS NEGOTIATIONS HERE, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THESE ARE BEING FOUND EXTREMELY TOUGH, IN PART BECAUSE OF INCREASINGLY OPTIMISTIC TECHNICAL REPORTS COMING OUT OF THE AREA AND BECAUSE OF INTEREST OF COMPETITORS. LATTER NOW SAID TO INCLUDE UNION MINIERE AS WELL AS ONE OF LARGE FRENCH MINERALS COMPANIES.

3. POSSIBLE THAT AMERICAN GROUP WILL SETTLE AT THIS POINT FOR PERTROLEUM CONCESSION WHICH WE UNDERSTAND GRB MAY BE WILLING OFFER THEM. ASSUME THIS WOULD BE ACCEPTED PARTLY IN ORDER TO KEEP TOE IN DOOR FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN NICKEL DEVELOPMENT.

4. COMMERCIAL INFORMATION PARA 2 AND 3 ABOVE IS PRIVILEGED AND NOT TO BE USED OUTSIDE USG.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: IN ORDER TO ASSIST EMBASSY IN DEALING WITH GRB AND OOTHER INQUIRIES CONCERNING AMERICAN GROUP, WOULD APPRECIATE ASAP ANY AVAILABLE COMMERCIAL INFORMATION ON BOTH ST. JOE AND INTERSEAS. YOST

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NICKEL, EXPLORATION, MINERAL RIGHTS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUJUMB00751
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS YOST
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BUJUMBURA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730712/aaaaaiui.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION COME
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 A. BUJUMBURA 466; B. BUJUMBURA 75, 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <25-Jan-2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTEREST IN BURUNDI NICKEL AND PETROLEUM POTENTIAL
TAGS: EMIN, EAID, BY, UNDP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005